

News from the Pews

The Newsletter of Markinch and Thornton Parish Church
August 2015



Markinch and Thornton Parish Church



Locum Minister:
Rev. Alistair McLeod

A warm welcome is extended to
all visitors and newcomers to the
community to share in the worship,
work and witness of the congregation.

Church Services

Thornton Church - Sunday 9.45am

Markinch Church - Sunday 11.15am

www.markinchandthorntonchurch.org.uk

Communion Sunday

You are invited to share in the celebration of

Holy Communion

in Thornton Church at 9.45 am
and Markinch Church at 11.15 am

on

Sunday 23rd August 2015

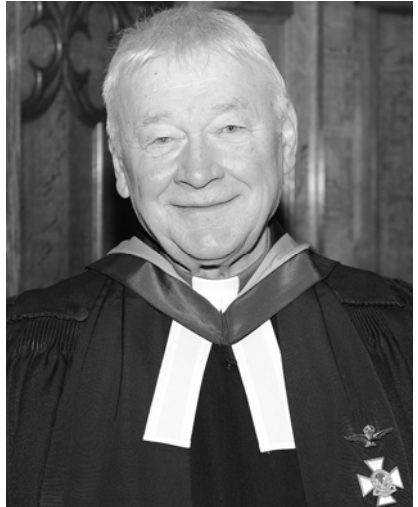
A message from Rev Alistair McLeod Our Locum Minister

Dear Friends,

I am continuing to be happy to minister to you at Markinch and Thornton, and I am getting to know most of you now by name, and that is good.

This must be an anxious time for you, wondering when you might get a full time minister of your own, but be assured, as long as I am able, and for as long as you want me, I will be here for you.

It saddens me a bit, as I know that it must sadden you too, to see the numbers worshipping on a Sunday are dwindling, but I assure you that this is a common phenomenon during a vacancy and that the numbers will increase again when the new man or woman comes to minister to you.



In the meantime, please let me know if I can do anything else for you. If you need to talk to me, I will always respond, and if you think that I can do something differently that will improve the congregation's experience of worship.

Alison and I work together on choosing hymns appropriate to the subject of the Scripture readings and the sermon, but we are always happy to include any favourite hymns you may want, especially if we haven't sung them for a while.

One or two people have expressed an interest in having a Bible study group. If there is sufficient interest, I would be happy to lead a group. I have spoken with the Session Clerk, and if you are interested please contact him before the Session Meeting in September when he will take the matter up with the Kirk Session.

I wish you every blessing.

Alistair

Your Elder is _____

Contact Details _____

Session Clerk's Report

Plea for help

I'm sorry that it's come to this, but the church is still a business and 'feels the pain' as much as any other business in the UK over the last few years, and we need to appeal to everyone now for financial help in order to meet our commitments. We don't want to become one of the 'failing' churches we hear about more commonly nowadays.

You should have received a letter from me separate to this message, although I wanted to incorporate the financial figures within this article to show you the position we are in at present.

Up to 3/8/15, we are in deficit to the extent of £2,253 (see below):

Income

Weekly Freewill Offering	15504
Standing Orders	13959
Open Plate	2899
Gift Day	3722
Donations	514
Tax Rebate	6283
Weddings & Funerals	1860
A Mitchell Bequest	66
Bank Interest	14
Advert-News from the Pews	75
Fund Raising	1747
Hall Rent	2090
NSI Interest	58
Part Ins. From General Trustees	6041
Other income	60
Selkirk Trust	1185
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Expenditure

Ministry Allocation	28313
Locum Minister	5894
Salaries	7731
Insurance	4507
Gas & Electricity	4672
Postages & Stationery	1473
Piano/Organ Repairs	1352
Church Repairs	943
Manse Repairs	113
Hall Repairs	222

Expenditure (cont.)

Advertising	391
Copyright Licence	463
Accountancy Fees	630
Pulpit Supply	494
Gift Day /WFO Envelopes	467
Life & Work	469
African Palms	17
Wreath	51
Entrust/Trust in Fife	128
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Deficit

-2253

We still have over £26,800 to pay towards Ministry Allocation, Minister's stipend and insurance costs by the end of the year!!

We can manage this with your help. Please review your present giving level, as even a small increase will help. Imagine a business where the income remains the same, or even decreases whilst the cost of living increases....they won't survive long. The church membership is on the decline, so it's not hard to see where we fit in.

We need to make the most of the Gift Aid scheme too. Everyone who pays tax on wages, pension income etc can sign a form allowing the church to reclaim the tax on offerings. So basically, only people paying no tax at all cannot sign a form. It's a great help to the church if you can sign the Gift Aid form you received earlier and pass to myself, or Nancy Munro, the church treasurer.

We have dedicated people at both Markinch and Thornton trying their best to keep both churches afloat, but when times are tough, we don't just need spiritual consolation, we also need everyone to dig deep financially and help our church.

Yours in God.

John G Wood, Session Clerk

Contact Details

Locum Minister	Rev Alistair McLeod Tel 01592 744558 Email alistairmcleod1936@gmail.com
Session Clerk	John G Wood 16 Loch Katrine Gardens, Glenrothes, KY6 2NW Tel 01592 750327 Email sessionclerk@markinchchurch.org.uk
Treasurer	Nancy Munro Tel 01592 743822 Email amunro6687@aol.com

From the Parish Register

Christenings

14-06-15 Fraser James Begley
09-08-15 Olivia Alexis McIntosh

Weddings

12-06-15 John Edward Kielt Daly and Gayle Fiona MacVicar
08-08-15 Lee Anthony Mullins and Sarah Lyle

Deaths

07-05-15 Beatrice Forbes
08-05-15 Florence Lister
10-07-15 Annie Keddie
13-07-15 Jean Hutton
22-07-15 John (Ian) Millar



Diary Dates

Every Monday	Coffee morning at Thornton, 10.00am-12noon
Every Monday	Prayer meeting at Thornton, 10.15am
Every Thursday	Coffee morning at Markinch, 10.00am-11.30am
23rd August	Communion Sunday, Thornton, 9.45am Markinch, 11.15am
3rd September	Youth Club resumes in Markinch Hall, 6.30pm-8.00pm
5th September	Autumn Teas, Thornton Hall, 10.00am-12noon
7th September	Fundraising Meeting, 10 Loch Venachar Gdns, G/R, 7.00pm
18th September	Quiz Night, Markinch Hall, 7.30pm
21st September	Session Meeting, Markinch Hall, 7.15pm
18th October	Christmas Hamper raffle tickets on sale
7th November	Winter Fayre & Hamper Draw, Markinch Hall, 10.00am-12noon
8th November	Remembrance Sunday
15th November	Communion Sunday
28th November	Christmas Teas, Thornton Hall, 10.00am-12 noon

Printed or Digital ?

A significant number of our members and friends now receive *News From The Pews* in an electronic format (PDF), rather than a printed copy.

If you would like to be added to the mailing list and receive the electronic copy instead of the printed copy delivered by your elder please contact Ken Wilkie confirming the email address(es) you wish the newsletter to be sent to. Call 01592 760042 or email ken.wilkie@lineone.net

Thornton Prayer Meetings

Our prayer group meets at 10.15am on a Monday morning. If you would like us to pray for you or any of your friends or relatives, we have prayer slips available with a box to put them in. These are available in the quiet room which is just before you enter the worship room .

We have had people from other churches join us at our Monday morning prayer time. Once again, we would like to invite people from Markinch to join us in our prayer meetings. All will be made very welcome.

Jean Kane, Prayer Promoter

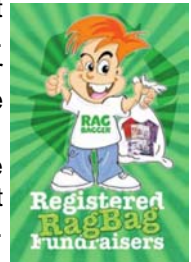
Rag Bag Collection

The Rag Bag Collection continues to provide us with a continuous income, but we continue to look for textiles, curtains, bed linens, towels, clothes, bags, belts and shoes. Please ensure that donations are placed in a tied plastic bag.

Please ask your neighbours, family, colleagues and friends to have a clear out and help this appeal by contributing as well.

Markinch Church have been collecting for some time but collections are now being made at Thornton Church as well. A large box has been placed in the choir room for your contributions. Please speak to Betty Gray if you need more information.

If you cannot transport your collection or have a large donation that you need assistance to move, please do not hesitate to contact Marianne Sankey to arrange collection.
Tel. 07801 279899



Photocopying and Printing Services

The church has a high specification photocopier in the Markinch Session House which we use to produce this quarterly newsletter and the weekly bulletins.

We are able to do colour or black and white printing up to A3 size at fairly competitive prices and we also have A4 folding and binding facilities. If you or your club, organisation or business require leaflets, posters or programmes printed please give us a chance to quote. Any profits we make will go to offset the rental costs of the photocopier. Contact Ken Wilkie on 01592 760042 or email ken.wilkie@lineone.net

Social Networking with Markinch and Thornton Parish Church

We now have a Facebook page and many of us share church events and world news via the Facebook account. You can join us to find out what we have planned, view photos of events and make comments on a variety of topics.

Go to www.facebook.com and search for **Markinch and Thornton Parish Church**

Sunday School

In May we covered the parable of the Two Houses so perhaps our singing of "The rains came down and the floods came up" was to blame for this summer's poor weather!

The last story of the session was how four men lowered their sick friend through the roof of a house so that he could see Jesus and be healed.

After the Prizegiving, children, parents and teachers enjoyed a session at Bongo's indoor play centre.

Once again we appeal for children to join us on a Sunday morning at Markinch. If you have neighbours with young family why not ask if you can bring them along a and meet us some week? Better still bring the parents too!

Surafel - Our Sponsored Child

Compassion has sent us a letter from the pastor of the centre that Surafel attends. In it he describes the help the children who attend the centre receive. Medical care, clothing and school supplies are some of the material things. He mentions those who attend the centre are more sociable and able to communicate better with adults. The complete letter can be seen in the hall at Markinch.

Thanks to all who have contributed so far - there are still plenty spaces on the calendar, please help fill them so we can sponsor Surafel for the rest of the year. Thank you.

Helen Paterson

Markinch Church Hall Youth Club

Our Youth Club session begins on Thursday 3rd September and runs from 6.30pm till 8pm in the Church hall. Anyone aged from 9 to 18 years of age can come along and enjoy a variety of games, sports, arts and crafts etc.

We expect parents to drop the youngsters off and collect them at the end of the session unless we receive written instructions that the youngsters are permitted to make their own way home afterwards.

There will be registration forms to complete on the first evening and the fee is only £2 per session plus some money for the tuck shop.

Anyone wishing to come along should contact Tracy Thomson by email on tthomson01592@hotmail.com for more information.

Church Hall Bookings

Anyone enquiring about booking the Markinch church hall should contact Karen Wood on 01592 750327 or email hall@markinchchurch.org.uk You can also collect a booking form from the notice board in the church hall.

To book Thornton church hall please contact Margaret Colville on 01592 774295

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Bob's Walk 2015

It was the perfect finale. After 117 miles walking from the Kelpies, near Falkirk to the Maggie's Centre in Dundee round the Fife Coastal Path, it was entirely appropriate that Bob Grant should lead us home.

Piped up the driveway to the Maggie's Centre in the shadow of Ninewells Hospital, he was given a guard of honour from the Harley Davidson motorcyclists who had staged a special ride out to be part of the day.

As they revved their throttles in tribute, he took several strides forward, paused to take a small bow and then completed the final steps of a remarkable, challenging and richly rewarding journey. A lovely moment, and a moving moment too; one to cherish for a long time to come.

The final day was an easy one, just a 6.8 mile walk from the Tayport services, across the bridge, along the waterfront and up to Maggie's Dundee. It was the only day of the walk where we could see our destination from the start point.

Even the weather couldn't spoil the party. True, it gave us a good soaking in the middle of the Tay Bridge - rain driven horizontally into the side of our heads thanks to the wind whipping down the Tay, but it literally blew over and the forecast which strongly suggested more showers proved to be wrong.

Back on the road we headed along the waterfront before the bikes all roared past in a cavalcade of blaring horns and sirens.

A single Harley Davidson stood guard at the turn into Maggie's, and the pipes and drums struck up as we made the last climb of the walk.

A special moment to remember; one to make you smile too – a warm memory which made every step of every day through three regions, over two bridges, right round Fife, on paths, beaches, farm tracks, inclines, and descents absolutely worth it.

Bob's Walk was a huge team effort both on the walk and behind the scenes – but the man at its very heart is the most remarkable of all, and pivotal to this fundraiser which, so far, has generated just over £15,000 for Maggie's Fife.

You can still donate online at www.justgiving.com/bobswalk2015

You can also donate by text message.

To donate £5 just text DOCB99 £5 to 70070

To donate £10 just text DOCB99 £10 to 70070

www.bobswalk.co.uk
www.facebook.com/bobswalk



Article by Allan Crow, Fife Free Press Group
Photograph by Ken Wilkie

Robert the Bruce's cave on the Isle of Arran

By Gavin Brown

In April, I went on a cycle and walking tour to the Isle of Arran. I caught the ferry, Caledonian Isles, from Ardrossan. Depending on the weather conditions, it takes one and a half hours to cross over to Arran. The Scottish government has reduced the fare for cars by fifty per cent, so the boat was quite busy.

Next day, after a night in Brodick, I cycled along to Corrie pass and Brodick Castle and gardens. In the background lay Goatfell Mountain. Corrie is famous for its falling rocks, and its large boulders which lie along the seashore. Later, I went on to Loch Ranza, where the whisky distillery produces a range of malt whiskies.



Later, I went on to Blackwater Foot, and Machrie Moor, which is famous for King Robert the Bruce's cave. Inside the cave, it was large, roomy, warm, and dry. The walls were covered in drawings. These drawings consisted of early Christian crosses, horses, wolves, and Viking runes.

Long ago, in the 18th century, kirk session meetings were held in the caves. Nearby, Machrie Moor has two stone circles, and twenty Iron Age hut

circles. I finished at Lamlash and the Holy Isle. I also went to Arran Aromatics and saw perfume being made and I also saw Arran Dunlop cheese being produced and packed.

Also, the island boasts a chocolate factory and brewery. The main industries on the island are tourism, sheep farming and dairy farming. The island wildlife is home to golden eagles, red deer, otters, goats, wild ponies, and lizards. Also, adders can be found here.

Arran's churches were well attended and well maintained. The roads were in good condition, whilst the scenery was spectacular. The island's inhabitants were very friendly.

I would like to go back again.



STEVEN JOHNSTON

Painter & Decorator



Home 01592 720843

Mob 07403222113

info@stevenjohnstondecorator.co.uk



Please help feed local people in crisis by buying items from our list and donating them to Glenrothes Foodbank.



Milk (UHT or powdered)
Sugar (500g)
Fruit juice (carton)
Soup
Pasta sauces
Sponge pudding (tinned)
Tomatoes (tinned)
Cereals
Rice pudding (tinned)
Tea bags/instant coffee
Instant mash potato
Rice/pasta
Tinned meat/fish
Tinned vegetables
Tinned fruit
Jam
Biscuits or snack bar

Church Flowers

To arrange for flowers to be put into Markinch Church contact Teresa Henderson on 01592 754892.

To arrange for flowers to be put into Thornton Church contact Margaret Colville on 01592 774295.

We would also ask if members of the congregation could inform us of the elderly, sick, bereaved or anyone who they think might like a visit. so that we can brighten up their Sundays with a lovely bouquet of flowers.



Markinch District Community Choir

Our new session starts on Wednesday 19th August. We meet at 7 o'clock every Wednesday in Markinch Church Hall. There are no auditions for the choir. Anyone aged 14 to 114 who enjoys singing would be very welcome.

We sing a wide variety of pieces with something to suit everyone. Present members come from all over the area and we have a big variety of ages. There is a break in rehearsals each week with tea and coffee available. This gives members the chance to get to know each other better.

As a Community Choir we perform two concerts each year in Markinch Town Hall and will perform at other venues if invited. There is a very friendly atmosphere and new members would be made very welcome.



Why don't you give it a try? We would love to see you!

Do you shop online at
amazon.co.uk

If so, you can help our church raise extra funds by using the link on the front page of the church website to take you directly to the Amazon website. If you then order any items from Amazon.co.uk our church will automatically receive a commission on every purchase you make, at no extra cost to you.















www.markinchandthorntonchurch.org.uk

Stonemasons working on Markinch Tower

The research results of the recent survey of about 870 individual stonemasons' marks will not be available for several weeks. Moira Greig, the archaeological expert, has much to record, draw and analyse before we can reach reasoned conclusions. However, those working on the project felt that we were beginning to get to know the individual masons as we moved up the tower, arching our necks, tilting the torch and sketching the individual marks. Some of the marks are difficult to describe in words and so I've had a bit of fun putting names to the workmen that cut them almost nine hundred years ago. We are also supposed to be cautious in drawing conclusions from such slender and controversial evidence but I have set aside caution in an attempt to bring life to a group of workmen who passed through Markinch so long ago. Perhaps some married local girls and have descendents in the town to this day.

Shown, are some of the marks found on the tower during the recent survey

The marks were most likely applied so that the workmen would be paid piecework rates when the tallyman came round. Amongst the guys that started work at the foot of the tower were Bow-tie Bill, Victoire and Andy (so-named because his mark was a simple St Andrews cross). They seem to have been top class masons working on the tower from the lowest courses right to the top. Victoire and Bill were very precise and had a high output. Bill finished his stones by dressing the surface with neat diagonal lines and he had a go at all shapes of block. The last chisel mark of the dressing was also

Bow-tie Bill		Wee Bill	
Victoire		Adolph	
Mick		Slasher	
Zed-Ned		Hashtag Harry	
Tepi Tim		The Arrow Boys	
Andy		Ringo	
Asterix		Big John	

the first stroke of his mark. Someone suggested that he may have cheated occasionally by adding his mark to blank stones. These blanks were perhaps produced by casual workers paid cash in hand but there are several theories. There is also a possibility that Bill was joined by his son (Wee Bill) when the tower was about one third built as both men's marks were found on a single stone and the triangle is half a bow-tie! Bill may have been involved in training local workers as it was on one of his stones that we found the diagram showing how to lay stones in the Norman manner.

Victoire's mark is well known in France from around this period but we do not know whether it was copied or whether he was far from home. He seems to have later carried out some work at Leuchars, perhaps for MacDuff's kinsman called Ness. Mick and Zed-Ned were also both employed from the start of the project but Zed-Ned seems to have left after the first year as his mark is not to be found further up the tower.

Newcomers after the first season appear to have been Adolph and Slasher (so named because his exuberant mark travels diagonally across the stone almost from corner to corner). Adolph, like Mick seems to have been skilled at cutting the curved stones used in the spiral staircase. Asterix may have arrived half way through the second year but stayed to the very end putting his mark on the topmost course of the old tower. He was a bit impatient and often in a hurry to finish a stone resulting in a coarser finish than some of his colleagues. He may have worked at Leuchars alongside Victoire.

Ringo's star-like mark begins to appear at the belfry level, perhaps around year three of the building project. He was very prolific and specialised in voussoir stones around the arched windows of the bell chamber. We may never know if it was the same man, perhaps towards the end of his career, who carved two stars on the wall of Dalmeny church on the other side of the Forth. Proving that a similar mark on two separate buildings was produced by the same mason is notoriously difficult as marks can be copied or produced twice by sheer chance. However, occasionally there are other characteristics such as the size and positioning of the mark or the detail of the surface dressing that will hopefully allow us to "fingerprint" a stone to a particular craftsman. This could help with the rough dating of a building as we have a historical record of when some buildings were started but not others.

All over the Markinch tower there are many types of arrow mark and we might speculate that this was a team of "Arrow Boys" who travelled the country, perhaps sharing their wages. The mark is common and is found at Dunfermline and Dalmeny. It is clear that the arrows are not assembly marks although such marks occasionally appear on other buildings.

Finally, we have given the master mason the name of Big John. If the mark of the St John's Cross on the nave side of the arch is contemporary with the building of the tower, then it was surely the master mason who applied the final cross of dedication that looked down over the nave until the Reformation (and still peeks out from behind the panelling on the balcony).



The masons left their mark on the project but we mustn't forget that there were probably dozens of carpenters, smiths, crane-operators, tilers, carters, mortar men and labourers swarming over the site when building was at a peak. Gradually all the traces left by these workers is disappearing and much has already been lost. It is important to the history of Fife and Scotland that we record and preserve this unique monument to a skilled master mason and a top-class team of workers.

Bruce Manson 2015

Markinch and Thornton Parish Church Fundraising Diary Dates for 2015

5th September **Autumn Teas, Thornton Hall 10am-12pm**

Stalls will include cake and candy, books, bric-a-brac, tombola etc. Donations to the stalls would be greatly appreciated. Helpers are also required. Tickets £2

18th September **Quiz Night, Markinch Hall 7.30pm**

18th October **Hamper Raffle Tickets On Sale**

7th November **Winter Fayre & Hamper Draw, Markinch Hall 10am-12pm**

We have started collecting craft items, raffle items, tombola items and books for the Winter Fayre. Please hand any donations in to Marianne Sankey, Meg Sankey, Karen Wood or Betty Gray. If you can help at the event by running a stall at the Fayre, please let us know. Any donations for Cake and Candy home produce can be donated on the morning of the Fayre. All contributions will be gratefully received. If you would like to book a stall at this event, please contact Karen Wood.

28th November **Christmas Teas, Thornton Hall 10am-12pm**

7th September **Fundraising Meeting, 10 Loch Venachar Gardens 7pm**

Many thanks to everyone who has volunteered to help with the fundraising effort, if you can spare some time to help at any of the events above or have any other ideas for fundraising activities please get in touch.

Communion Coin Boxes – There are individual collection boxes for you to take home or to work and fill between communion services. Collection boxes can be emptied any Sunday or Thursday morning by seeing Marianne Sankey, Karen Wood or Meg Sankey. Additional boxes will be made available for anyone who wishes to take one to work, or give to their extended family or non-members who would like to help. If you cannot collect a box but would like one, we can deliver and collect them by telephoning Marianne Sankey on 07801 279899.

Rag Bag – Donate any clothes, towels, bed linens, shoes, curtains, bags or textiles. If you need transport for your donation, please contact Marianne on 07801 279899 to arrange an uplift.

Jigsaw Lending Library – A cost of £1 per jigsaw. If you require any information about this activity please contact Meg Sankey on 07834 729420.

Markinch Church Figurines At a cost of only £19.99 each these are an ideal gift for friends or as a keepsake for anyone who is getting married in the church.

Sales Table – Handcraft items for sale in Markinch hall. Please feel free to make a donation to church funds in the dish provided. To donate handcrafts, baking, plants, jams, chutney's etc., please place them on the sales table before any church service.

'Made in Markinch' Cookbook - At a cost of £5. Limited availability left.

'Cross in my Pocket' – These keepsakes are available in the vestibule at a cost of £1 each.

Fundraising Meeting

The next fundraising meeting will be held on Monday 7th September at 10 Loch Venachar Gardens, Glenrothes at 7.00pm This meeting is for all members of the Fundraising Committee and anyone else who feels that they can contribute to the fundraising effort in any way.

Please feel free to attend the meeting to find out what is going on, if you have ideas but don't want to run an event yourself or if you are willing to donate your time to assist at any of the events. If you are not able to attend the meeting, but are willing to help or have an idea, please let either Betty Gray (07531 765748) or Marianne Sankey (07801 279899) know.

We look forward to seeing you there and finding out what new ideas people can bring from other organisations or events that they have attended.

Autumn Teas **Thornton Church Hall** **Saturday 5th September** **10.00am to 12noon**

Stalls will include, cake & candy, books, bric-a-brac, tombola etc.

Donations to stalls would be greatly appreciated
and helpers are also required on the day.

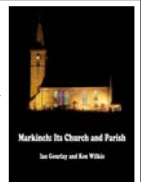
Tickets £2 or pay at the door

Markinch : Its Church and Parish

By Ian Gourlay and Ken Wilkie

Copies can be obtained from Ken Wilkie on 01592 760042 or by email at book@markinchchurch.org.uk

Hardback £15 - The paperback is currently not available.



In matters controversial
my perception is just fine.

I always see both sides of things,
the one that's wrong - and mine!

Remember - This is **YOUR newsletter !**

If you have any interesting news, stories, poems etc, please hand them to Ken Wilkie or email ken.wilkie@lineone.net or call 01592 760042

The deadline for the next issue is 25th October 2015

Book Review: David Baldacci - Saving Faith

A renegade CIA faction attempts to reassert the agency's primacy over the FBI by manipulating members of Congress who fund both outfits. To do so, the CIA conspirators aim to take over a bribery scheme they've discovered. The scam was concocted by legendary lobbyist Danny Buchanan, who has been greasing the palms of lawmakers to gain their support of bills aiding the poor and hungry overseas. The spooks plan to assassinate Buchanan and his protégé, the lovely Faith Lockhart, and force the legislators, under threat of exposure, to support the CIA over the FBI. First, however, they'll have to kill the FBI person guarding Faith, for she has confessed everything to the bureau in hopes of working a deal for herself and Buchanan. But the CIA villains haven't reckoned on the resilience of the two lobbyists, nor on the grit of FBI agent Brooke Reynolds, nor on the skill of PI Lee Adams, who gets caught up in the attempted hit on Faith and her guardian - and who then goes on the run with the lobbyist. The novel evolves into a frantic, exciting chase, FBI after CIA after Lee/Faith, with a few nifty twists. Baldacci's characters continue to grow in complexity - some may say there's too many heroes and subplots.

Saving Faith is basically a book about a woman who knows too much and as a result, is on the run. Faith Lockhart knows information that can destroy the careers of quite a few politicians and it seems that everyone is out to kill her. While this is not a new theme for a novel, Baldacci manages to tell his story from a fresh perspective.

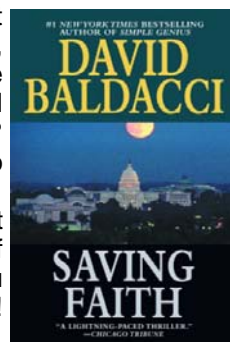
I was glad that Baldacci had two strong female characters in this novel. Faith Lockhart is an assistant to a very persuasive lobbyist. Brooklyn Dodgers Reynolds is a FBI agent that has not become the hardened bitter agent that so often graces the pages of novels these days. These two women were portrayed as competent women who struggled with doing the right things. They were not super women who had it all and I appreciated the fact that they were not portrayed as women who would run screaming through a forest in high heels, as a murderer wielding a chainsaw was chasing them. Instead, I saw two very real women trying to do their jobs well.

Lee Adams is a Private Investigator drawn into Faith's nightmare by accident and initially you may think he is meant to save the day. While Lee does save the day at certain points in the book, there is no clear cut hero/heroine, rather each character seems to rise to the occasion. Danny Buchanan, Faith's boss is a man who seems to be running from his own set of demons and Robert Thornhill is the man that seems to be indestructible and knows all. David Baldacci explores the motives behind each of these men's actions creating an interesting game of cat and mouse.

What I found most interesting in this novel was the fact that both the good guys and the bad guys were breaking the law, each for their own agendas, although one may seem more altruistic than the other. Still, Saving Faith raises several questions. Is it okay to do illegal things in order to help others? Where do we draw the line and to what extent will we go to save those we love? Ultimately what is really important to us?

Overall, I would have to say that Saving Faith was not the best book that I have ever read but I did enjoy it. The ending of Saving Faith was not really a surprise and leaves you wondering what happens next to the characters. Worth a read!

John Wood



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